

The President's Daily Brief

~~Top Secret~~ 13 October 1967



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DAILY BRIEF
13 OCTOBER 1967

1. South Vietnam

An overambitious reporter who garbled his facts was apparently responsible for yesterday's story about Thieu's plans to suggest a meeting with Ho Chi Minh. Embassy Saigon reports the correspondent, a Vietnamese working for Reuters, called on Thieu's press officer for a routine review during which the subject of talks with the North came up. The press officer repeated the position taken by Thieu last August. The correspondent took it from there with ruffles and flourishes.

2. Thailand

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3. South Korea

The opposition party's boycott of the National Assembly, which has blocked legislative business since June, seems to be breaking up. Government pressure coaxed one member of the opposition back to his seat and others will probably follow.

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4. Greece

The King is concerned that the crunch may be just around the corner. Embassy Athens reports that the junta has proposed putting Papadopoulos in as deputy premier but the King refuses.

Some officials have warned Constantine that this move represents the long-planned "phase two" of the revolution--a move aimed at increasing Papadopoulos' control of the armed forces, if not the country as a whole. These people are telling the King that he must resist this gambit.

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There is no hint yet as to the next move from either side.

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5. Iraq

6. Uruguay

The political situation is still unsettled. So far, five cabinet members have resigned over the state of siege imposed on Monday, but President Gestido has not stepped in to fill the vacancies. The government is maintaining its tough stand against the Communists, and the one-day general strike on Wednesday was only partially effective.

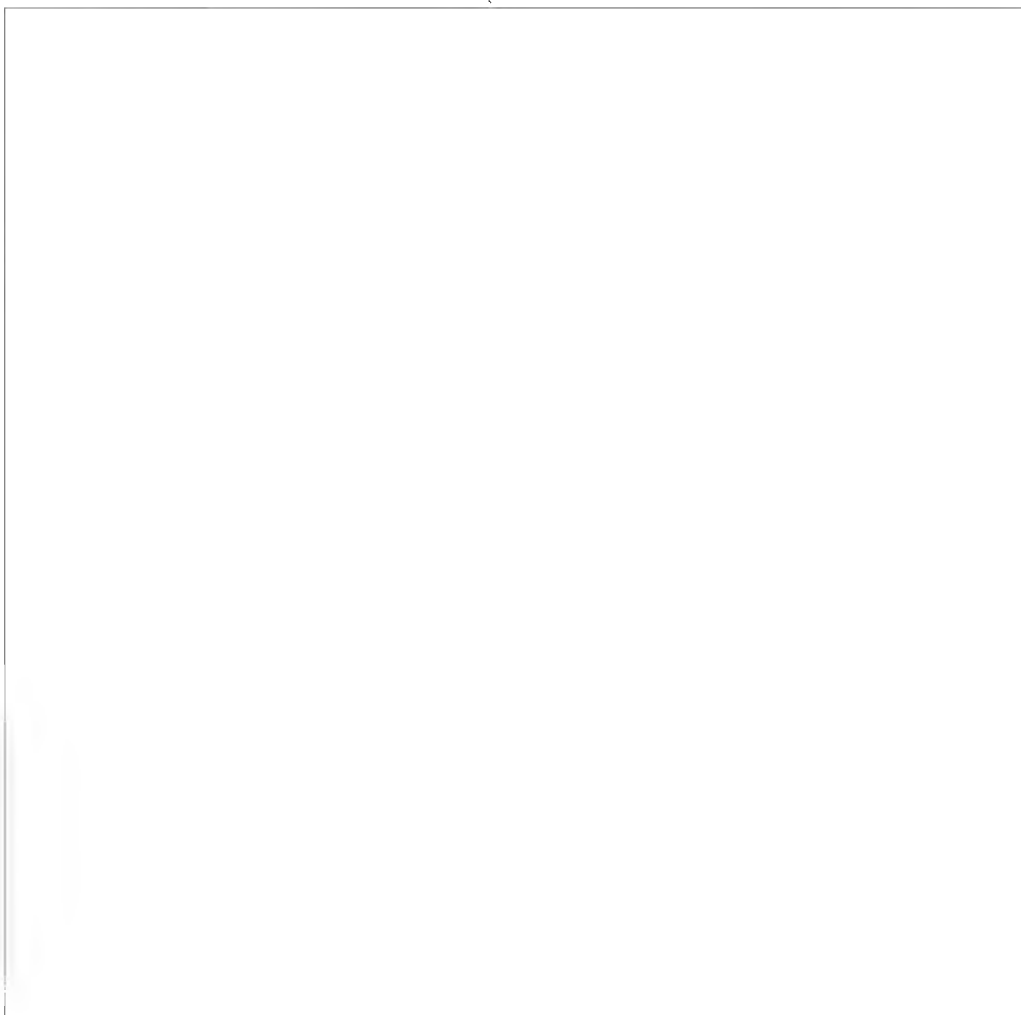
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SPECIAL DAILY REPORT ON NORTH VIETNAM
FOR THE PRESIDENT'S EYES ONLY

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Special Daily Report on North Vietnam
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I. NOTES ON THE SITUATION

Military Conscription: A North Vietnamese national recently reported that since January the authorities in his village in Nghe An Province had been "very severe" on conscription. All of the men in his village between the ages of 17 and 35 were required to take physical examinations; all except those who were crippled or in very poor health had to be prepared to serve. Since January, four villagers had been drafted, including one who was 35 and had three children. Three of the four had not been heard from since being drafted.

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This report is similar to others, particularly from the southern provinces of North Vietnam, which reflect some lowering in draft standards. The reports are believed to reflect local policies, however, and cannot be considered indicative of conditions throughout the country. [REDACTED]

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Indians Know Not Whereof They Speak: On 6 October the Indian defense minister stated before the UN General Assembly that India was sure an end to the bombing would lead to an international conference on Vietnam. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] this was but one of a series of ill-advised speeches on foreign policy made by Indian officials over the past few months.

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II. NORTH VIETNAMESE REFLECTIONS OF US POLITICAL ATTITUDES ON THE WAR

Hanoi on Domestic Criticism: Hanoi propaganda is taking note of the current domestic debate on the Vietnam issue. A North Vietnamese broadcast beamed to South Vietnam on 10 October quoted Western sources as stating that "Johnson, the top warmonger, has again

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brazenly called for a continued escalation of the aggressive war in Vietnam, although his clique was badly defeated and deeply bogged down in a seriously deadlocked situation."

The broadcast continued by taking note of press criticisms of the administration's position on the war. It noted that the New York Times reported on 8 October that 245 previously pro-Johnson state governors and congressmen have protested "Johnson's war policy." The Times was also quoted as saying that more and more people in American political circles realize the failure of the "Johnson clique in Vietnam."

Finally, the broadcast reported an 8 October statement by "former President Kennedy's personal representative" (presumably Arthur Schlesinger) to the effect that "Johnson's present war escalation in Vietnam is a tragic failure." The representative was further quoted as saying that the American people should vote to remove Johnson from power unless he abandons his escalation of the war in Vietnam.

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